July/August/September 1996 Volume 21, Number 3

To Our Neighbors

A summary of recent news stories from the University of California San Francisco

UCSF

UCSF offers new program for heart health

This summer the UCSF Medical Center will begin offering an assessment and education program for those who want to know their risk of having a heart attack and what steps to take to lower that risk to increase their chances of living a long and productive life.

Called the Cardiovascular Health Assessment and Modification Program or CHAMP, the service will inform patients about their risk status for developing coronary heart disease based on test results from a one-day visit. Often, people who are at risk of heart attack — the most common cause of death and disability in the US — are not even aware that they may have a heart problem, says Philip H. Frost, MD, associate clinical professor of medicine.

A novel approach to cardiovascular health, CHAMP brings together a team of specialists in cardiology and metabolic disease who share a strong commitment to preventing and reducing risks of heart attack, blockage of the heart's blood supply. Benefits of lowering risks have been demonstrated in several settings, including UCSF.

Using the latest information and technology, CHAMP specialists review a patient's medical history with results of a physical exam, conduct an electrocardiogram as well as laboratory and cardiac function tests. Each patient will receive an individualized, computer-generated risk assessment summary at the end of the day. Depending on the results of the patient assessment, additional counseling, testing or treatment may be recommended.

CHAMP offers three levels of assessments, including an in-depth package that features advanced imaging of the heart and stress testing. For more information about the program or to make an appointment when the service starts in August, call the CHAMP coordinator at (415) 476-6665.

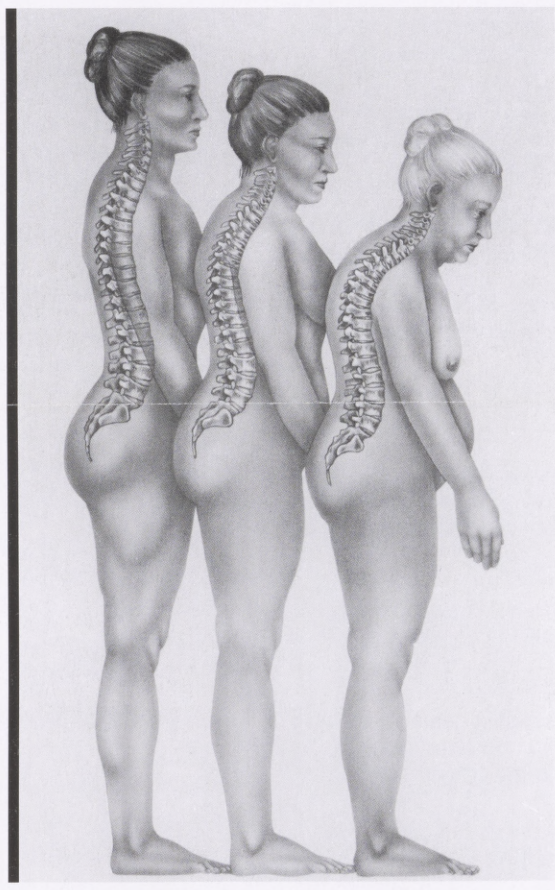
Drug lowers risk of hip fractures

Post-menopausal women with osteoporosis who have had a previous spinal fracture and who take the medicine alendronate are at 51 percent lower risk of debilitating hip fractures and 46 percent lower risk of new spinal fractures, according to UCSF researchers.

"The results are exciting and significant because nearly all hip fractures require hospitalization," says Dennis Black, PhD, associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics, "and up to 20 percent of women who suffer hip fractures die within a year."

Developed by Merck & Co. Inc., alendronate is available as FOSAMAX in more than 30 countries including the US. Other key findings of women using the drug include: 89 percent reduction in multiple spinal fractures; 44 percent reduction in wrist fractures and 50 percent reduction in loss of height.

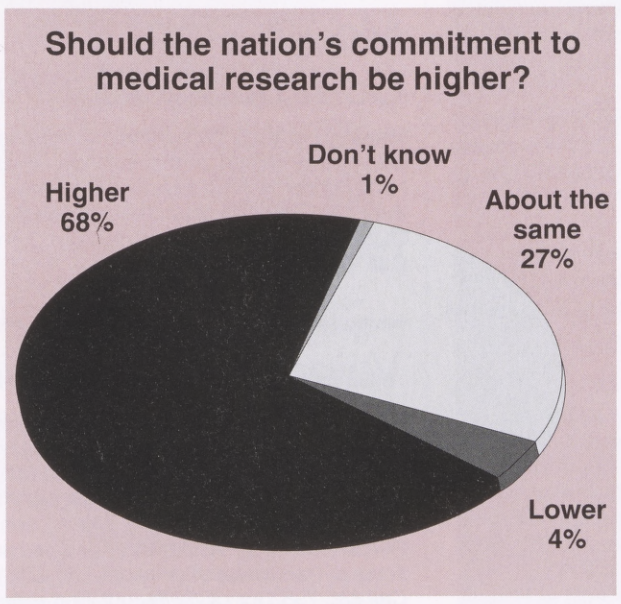
More than 200 million women worldwide suffer from osteoporosis. About 250,000 Americans each year fracture their hips as a result of the disease—which causes the bones to become thin and vulnerable. The most expensive fractures to repair, hip fractures cost the US an estimated $10 billion a year.



Californians rate research as high priority

At a time when federal funding for academic research is under fire, a poll of 1,000 Californians shows that two-thirds think the national commitment to medical research should be higher.

As shown in the chart below, 95 percent of those polled said the national commitment to medical research should be higher or at least stay about the same.



Source: Research! California, May 1996

Some 86 percent of respondents approve of federal government spending to sponsor scientific research at universities and half said this spending should be increased, according to results of a telephone poll commissioned by Research! California, a coalition of universities, companies and health organizations in the state.

Nearly all or 94 percent of poll respondents said it is important for California to be a leader in medical research and 83 percent said such research is important to jobs and incomes in the state. Some 84 percent said it is very important that the nation maintain its role as a world leader in medical research. In fact, compared to a June 1995 survey among adults nationwide, Californians place a greater emphasis on maintaining this leadership.

Californians agree that the federal government, private business and individual citizens should all be involved in financing more research. Two-thirds said they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who is a strong supporter of federal spending for medical research.

Survey findings were released May 28 at the California Coalition for Science & Technology Summit in Sacramento, a forum designed to improve support for science and technology in California.

Kathryn MacDonald

Excelsior clinic medical staff include, from left to right, Director Jay Bachicha, MD, UCSF assistant professor of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive services, Karen Gandley, a certified nurse midwife, and Gloria Yee, nurse manager.

Excelsior clinic opens

A new primary health clinic opened recently in the Excelsior District, as a joint venture between UCSF and San Francisco General Hospital.

Located at 4434 Mission Street, The Excelsior Group HealthCare for Women and Children has a medical staff who are bilingual in Spanish, Cantonese and Mandarin. The new group serves families in the Excelsior, Noe Valley, Bernal Heights, Glen Park and Mission neighborhoods. For more information or to make an appointment, call (415) 406-1353.

UCSF talks merger with Stanford

At this writing, talks continue about the proposed merger of the clinical enterprises of UCSF and Stanford. UCSF's leaders have been involved in talks with Stanford since last summer to explore a collaboration that would enable the campus to preserve its long-standing missions in teaching, research and patient care. The talks are exploring the possibility of creating a new nonprofit, private corporation to administer the UCSF Medical Center, UCSF/Mount Zion, Stanford Health Services (which include both the hospital and clinics), the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford, and the affiliated clinical practices of the full-time faculty at these locations. UCSF's affiliated SFGH and the SF VA Medical Center are not part of these discussions.

NIH awards grant for ovarian cancer research at UCSF

The National Institutes of Health has awarded UCSF a $5.7 million grant to study ovarian tumors, the largest amount the agency has ever directed toward fighting this type of cancer.

Among the most successfully treated tumors when discovered at an early stage, ovarian cancer is the most deadly gynecological disease in the US because of late diagnoses. A major goal of the UCSF research is to improve survival rates by identifying cellular and biochemical markers, which researchers hope will indicate the presence of an ovarian tumor at any stage of the disease, especially before a tumor spreads.

UCSF tests stroke drug

As part of a national trial, UCSF is testing a drug that dissolves blood clots and may limit the extent of brain injury caused by stroke. Previous research suggests that treatment with the drug, a modified form of a naturally occurring enzyme, within the first six hours of stroke symptom onset limits the amount of permanent brain damage associated with stroke. Each year, more than 550,000 Americans suffer from a stroke, a leading cause of death and disability in the US. For more information, call the UCSF Stroke Service at (415) 476-7489.

More news for you
on the back page

What's happening

To Our Neighbo
July/August/Sep
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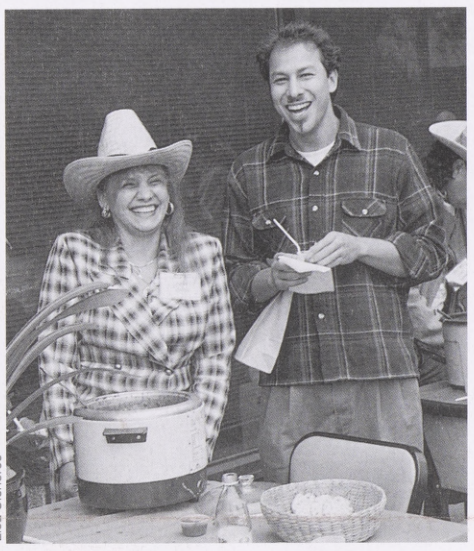
events at UC Sa

Special Events

Sunday, July 21
Tenth Annual AIDS Walk San Francisco. Join the UCSF team walking to raise money for the SF AIDS Foundation or sponsor a walker. Co-sponsored by Public Service Programs. Golden Gate Park. Sign-in: 9:30 a.m. Walk begins: 10:30 a.m. Call 476-4394 or 392-WALK for details.

Saturday, Aug. 3
UCSF Child Care Center Yard Sale. Donations may be dropped off at the Center, 610 Parnassus. Call 476-1616 for details.

Saturday-Sunday, Aug. 24-25 & Sept. 21-22
UCSF at SF Giants Games. UCSF sponsors a booth with information on its services and programs during pre-game festivities at four San Francisco Giants baseball games. 3Com Park. Call 885-7777 for more information.



Lisa Cisneros

Thursday, Sept. 12
Fifth Annual Chili Cook-off. Sponsored by EMPACT! 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Call 476-2675 for location and other details.

Community Health Education Series

Free lectures sponsored by the UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging. Held on Saturdays from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Call 750-5342 to register and for locations.

Sept. 7
Stroke & Stroke Prevention.

Oct. 19
Pain Management in the 21st Century.

AIDS Programs

The UCSF AIDS Health Project (AHP) offers a variety of free support groups for residents of San Francisco, including groups for people with AIDS, who are asymptomatic HIV+, HIV+ African-American heterosexual men, HIV- with AIDS-related concerns and caregivers. Drop-in groups, monthly disability workshops, social events for HIV+ and HIV- people and meditation and self-help groups also are offered. The Project also provides free individual risk assessments & referrals. For more information, an intake interview for a particular group or an appointment for a risk assessment, visit the AHP at its new location, 400 Castro St., or call 476-3902.

Institute of Healing Arts & Sciences

Call 330-5353 for a complete schedule of July, August and September talks.

Monday, July 15
Introduction to Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. A meditative approach to coping with anxiety, stress, chronic pain and stress-related illness. Free. Room 721, Nursing Building, enter through 513 Parnassus. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Call 441-3731 for more information.

Brown Bag Lectures

Free lectures held weekly at **12:10 p.m. on Wednesdays in Room 225, Nursing Building,** enter through 513 Parnassus (P); monthly on Thursdays in Room 125, UCSF/Mission Center Building (MCB), 1855 Folsom St.; and monthly on Tuesdays in Herbst Hall, UCSF/Mount Zion (MZ), 1600 Divisadero. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394.

July 3
How Do You Measure Quality of Care in Hospitals and Nursing Homes? (P)

July 10
Patience Patients — There Is a Doctor in the House. Lonnie R. Bristow, president, American Med. Assn., discusses what physicians are doing to bring about change for patients and what's ahead in Washington, D.C. (P)

July 16
Cosmetic Surgery: Do You Believe in Magic? (MZ)

July 17
Expressing Your Creative Spirit. Share in the stories and artwork created by UCSF/Mount Zion patients with cancer and AIDS. (P)

July 18
Will to Live. Hope, courage, a positive attitude and good medical care are the key ingredients of the will to live. (MCB)

July 24
Pediatric AIDS: Perinatal Transmission & Strategies for Prevention. (P)

July 31
Memory Mechanisms. What is the biology of learning and how does it affect memory? (P)

Aug. 7
Stress & Its Effect on the Immune System. (P)

Aug. 14
Menopause: Health Issues for the Prime Time. Explore the risks and benefits of hormone therapy and learn about the alternatives. (P)

Aug. 15
The Headache Hour. New developments on the common causes and treatments of headaches. (MCB)

Aug. 20
Creating Great Chemistry. Learn to establish rapport, eliminate misunderstandings and improve relationships and productivity. (MZ)

Aug. 21
Current Controversies in Temporomandibular Disorders (TMJ). (P)

Aug. 28
Will to Live. Hope, courage, a positive attitude and good medical care are the key ingredients for the will to live. (P)

Sept. 4
Simplifying & Funding the Path of Your Financial Future. (P)

Sept. 11
Attending to Ritalin. Explore the social and ethical considerations of Attention Deficit Disorder and the drug Ritalin. (P)

Sept. 17
Managing Your Way Through Managed Care. Patients learn how to take better control over the quality of their health care. (MZ)

Sept. 18
Transforming Your Life: How to Change Before It's Too Late. (P)

Sept. 19
Health Issues for the Prime Time. What women need to know about sexuality, heart disease and menopause. (MCB)

Sept. 25
Healthy Aging for Men: A User's Guide. (P)

Blood Donation

Wednesday, July 24
Blood Drive. Millberry Conf. Center, 500 Parnassus. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Don't wait for a blood drive to give blood. Donate any weekday, 8 a.m.-7:45 p.m., or Saturday, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at UCSF's Blood Donor Center, Room 131, Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus. For information and appointments call 476-6989.

Campus Tours

All tours are free and begin at 1 p.m. on the first Friday of each month. Meet in the Moffitt/Long Hospital lobby, 505 Parnassus. Sponsored by Public Service Programs. Call 476-4394 for more information.

Women's Programs

Events sponsored by the Women's Resource Center, unless otherwise noted. Call 476-5222 to register for workshops and for information on ongoing support groups.

Thursday, July 11
Designer Poisons. Learn about pesticides and how to make your home safer. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Saturday, July 13
Workshop: Mothering Competent Daughters — Girlhood to Adolescence. For women with daughters ages 9 to 14. $35. Room 157, Medical Sciences Bldg, 513 Parnassus. 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, July 18
Honoring Our Voices: Native American Women Overcoming Family Violence. Six Native American women talk about family violence and ending the cycle of abuse. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. Room 217, Nursing Bldg, enter through 513 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Thursday, July 25
Your Body Is My Business: Weight Prejudice and the Morality of Health in America. Examine the misconception that thin women are healthy and fat women are couch potatoes and gluttons. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Saturday, July 27
Workshop: Women's Health & Fitness. Learn the latest about estrogen therapy, osteoporosis, exercise and more. $20. Room 157, Medical Sciences Bldg, 513 Parnassus. 10 a.m.-noon.

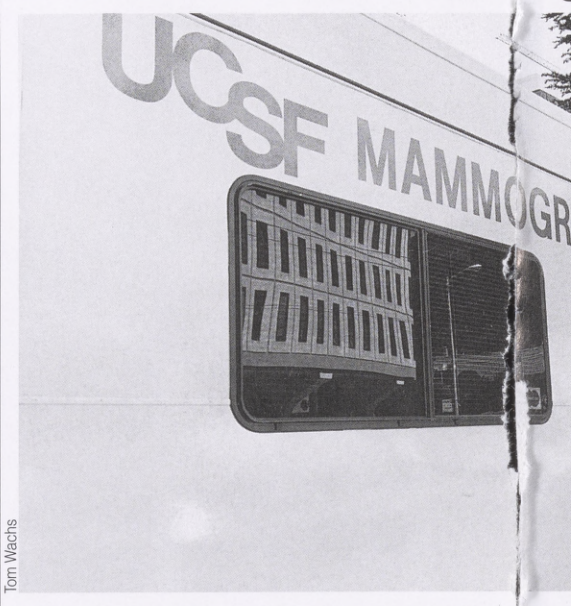
Tuesday, Aug. 6
Workplace Injury Prevention Series: Loosen Up! Learn how stretching can reduce stress and decrease the chance of injury. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Tuesday, Aug. 13
Are You Running Your Mouse or Is Your Mouse Running You? Arrange your workstation to reduce discomfort and avoid injuries. Toland Hall, 533 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Saturday, Aug. 17
Workshop: Everyone Is a Poet. Explore this non-threatening way to gain fresh insight into everyday experiences. $5. Room 182, Medical Sciences Bldg, 513 Parnassus. 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 22
Sexual Coercion & War: War Rapes in Croatia & Bosnia-Herzegovina. Learn about womens' experiences of violence in former Yugoslavia and how rape is used as a weapon of war. Sponsored by Rape Prevention Education Program. Room 217, Nursing Bldg, enter through 513 Parnassus. Noon-1 p.m.

Breast Cancer Screening



Tom Wachs

Women can have low-cost mammograms —X-rays to s van that travels to convenient Bay Area locations. The p and costs $65. Your physician's approval is required, pl number to assure results are mailed promptly. Ap pointm six weeks in advance. Find out when the van will be in y between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. A $ available at the UCSF/Mount Zion Medical Cente Radi

Art Exhibits

Hospitals Auxiliary Art Exhibit. On display in Moffitt/Long Hospitals lobby, 505 Parnassus, through Monday, Aug. 26 will be works by Beth Katz and Chester Yoshida. On display Monday, Aug. 26 through Monday, Sept. 23 will be works by Alice Gibbon and Susan Miller. A portion of all proceeds benefits patients at the UCSF Medical Center. Call 476-4906.

Great Expectations for Women's Health

The UCSF Birth Center offers classes & video presentations for expectant parents on Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., in Room 326, Ambulatory Care Center, 400 Parnassus. Call 476-6667 for a schedule of classes and for information about Mothers of Twins Club.

July 17
Childbirth Choices: Options for Labor & Birth.

Fridays, Aug. 2-30
Childbirth Preparation: Birth Alternatives. Class series for women wishing to have an intimate, fully involved birth experience. $115 (35% discount for women having a baby at UCSF). Call 476-6667 to register.

Aug. 21
Birth Alternatives: Adapting Home Birth Methods to Hospital Births.

Mount Zion Community Meetings

Meetings to keep the community apprised of activities of interest and to listen to neighborhood concerns. Next meeting: **Tuesday, July 23.** Executive Board Room, 2nd floor, UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. 7 p.m. Call 476-3206.

Volunteer Orientation

Program to acquaint prospective volunteers with opportunities available in the Medical Center at UCSF. Meetings take place at Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute Auditorium, 401 Parnassus, and at UCSF/Mount Zion in Herbst Hall, 1600 Divisadero. For dates and times of Parnassus orientations call 476-1196. Call 885-7353 for UCSF/Mount Zion schedule.

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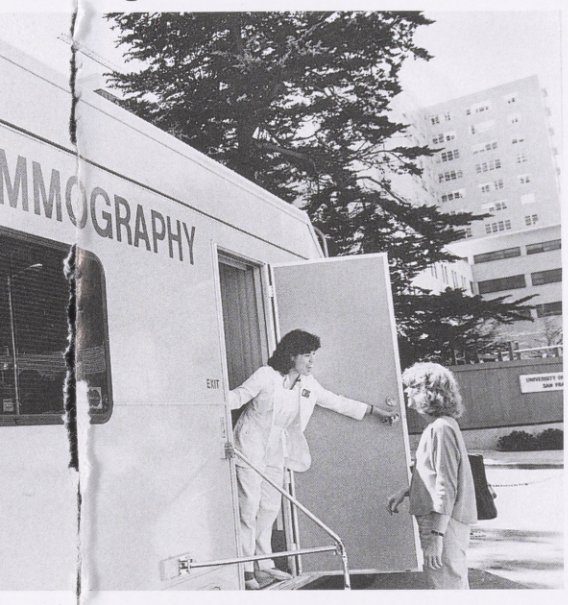

—X-rays to screen for breast cancer — from a mobile
cations. The procedure takes approximately 20 minutes
s required, plus his/her full name, address & telephone
ptly. Appointments must be made at least one month to
van will be in your neighborhood by calling 476-2193
gh Friday. A $65 mammography screening also is
l Center Radiology Department. Call 885-7465.

Cole Hall Cinema

Returns in October. Call 476-6761 for schedule.

Ongoing Meetings & Hotlines

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group: Facilitated by a social worker, this group is for those caring for someone with Alzheimer's or a related dementia. Meets the first Saturday of the month. Co-sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association. 10:30 a.m.-noon. UCSF/Mount Zion Center on Aging Alzheimer's Day Care Center, 3600 Geary Blvd. Call 800-660-1993.

AWAKE: AWAKE (alert, well and keeping energetic) is a support and education group for people with sleep apnea and their families. Meets the third Thursday of each month and features guest speakers on topics relating to sleep apnea, followed by time for socializing and support. Bring your CPAP equipment to have it checked by a homecare specialist. Sponsored by UCSF/Mount Zion Sleep Disorders Center. Call 885-7886.

Cancer Programs/Support Groups: UCSF/Mount Zion Cancer Center offers free cancer programs and support groups, including dance therapy, t'ai chi, exercise and nutrition classes, plus support groups for cancer patients and their families and friends, breast, colon and head and neck cancer patients. Call 885-3693 for reservations.

Cancer Referral Hotline: The UCSF Cancer Referral Service enables cancer patients to place just one telephone call and learn the names of UCSF doctors specializing in the kind of treatment they need. Call 800-888-8664.

Look Good, Feel Better: Expert advice on makeup, wigs and the use of turbans provided for people who have undergone chemotherapy or radiation. Held every other month in 11 Long Solarium, Long Hospital, 505 Parnassus, and at UCSF/Mount Zion, 1600 Divisadero. Co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society and supported by the Donna Smith Fund. Call 476-1383 to pre-register for Parnassus meetings, 885-3693 for UCSF/Mount Zion meetings.

UCSF

University of California San Francisco
Public Affairs
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San Francisco, CA 94143-0462

In lupus, the body's defenders — or antibodies — attack healthy tissue.

The disease had kept her from dancing.

But when April Alvarado went to her junior prom in May, she twisted, hip and hopped and never missed a beat — or a chance to dance. For 16-year-olds, dancing means being fit enough to endure the fast-paced tunes that seem to last forever. For April, no sweat.

Just six years ago, it was a different story. There were days when she could not muster enough energy to go with her family to the shopping mall, recalls her mother, Rosanna. April's knees and elbows swelled and ached so much that the active and athletic youngster had to quit playing soccer and softball. Being a kid wasn't supposed to be so full of hurt. "People were telling us that it was growing pains," says Rosanna. "But this went on for a year."

When a butterfly-shaped rash across April's nose and on her cheeks — which they thought was sunburn — did not disappear in the winter, her father, Phil, knew something was seriously wrong. He had seen the same warning sign in his sister, who suffers from lupus, a chronic disease that inflames various parts of the body.

Laboratory tests, indeed, confirmed that young April had systemic lupus.

The disease is an "autoimmune" disorder in which the body's defense system becomes overactive and loses its ability to differentiate between foreign substances — such as germs and viruses — and its own cells and tissues. The body's defenders, or antibodies, thus attack healthy tissue. What causes lupus is unknown, but genetic and environmental factors are believed to play a role. Sunlight, stress and infections, for example, could spark the immune system to go haywire in lupus sufferers. For most of the 1.5 to 2 million people estimated to have lupus — the majority of them women — the disease is mild, affecting only a few organs. But for others, it may cause serious and even life-threatening problems.

"When April was diagnosed (in 1991) we asked her doctor where we should go for the best possible treatment, and he said UCSF," says Rosanna. The Alvarados, who live in the city of Weed, near Mount Shasta, were referred to pediatrician Helen Emery, who is part of a mutidisciplinary team of health care professionals — including specialist physicians and nurses, physical therapists and social workers —who care for more than 1,000 children a year with rheumatic disease such as systemic lupus, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis and scleroderma. The UCSF program offers a wide range of diagnostic tests to unmask these difficult-to-detect diseases and the newest therapies.

The timing of April's referral to UCSF was propitious, as tests — including a kidney biopsy — soon found that the lupus was advancing to a more serious stage. April was beginning to suffer from kidney damage, one of the most serious symptoms of lupus. Already on a regimen of steroids to reduce inflammation, April began an aggressive monthly treatment with Cytoxan, a chemotherapy which targets and destroys the hyperactive immune cells that were wreaking havoc on her organs. As with most powerful drugs, they were not without side-effects. April lost some of her hair, and because her immune system was suppressed, she was susceptible to infections.

But after three years, the treatment has stemmed the disease and all her hair has grown back. And except for having to wake up at 3 a.m. every three months for the four hour-drive to UCSF to get intravenous administration of the drug, her lupus is much less of a bother. April's last visit was brightened when one of her doctors, pediatric immunologist Melissa Elder, came in on her day off to visit with her family.

April has had to make some lifestyle changes. She keeps out of the sun and she's given up skiing, because the cold triggers arthritis. She also exercises to prevent muscle weakness and fatigue. Above all, April has nurtured a strong belief that she will win the battle against the disease.

April now enjoys a normal teenage life. She got her driver's license, and, even with her illnesses, she's on target to graduate next year. And she always looks forward to the next dance.

—Andy Evangelista

For more information, call the pediatric rheumatology program at (415) 476-1736.

Tom Wachs

Heart attack risk assessment service begins

Drug lowers risk of hip fractures in women

Californians rate medical research as high priority

To Our Neighbors

July/August/September 1996

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To Our Neighbors

UCSF Women's Health expands services

UCSF Women's Health has expanded its services to include a new resource and referral line. This line, (415) 476-0668, is staffed weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., by women knowledgeable in women's health. The staff will assist women in locating health resources as well as providing referrals to doctors with expertise in women's health care — from adolescence through menopause and beyond.

UCSF Women's Health is pleased to announce that BaySpring Women's Medical Group on Fillmore Street is now formally affiliated with UCSF. This brings a third convenient location in which primary care, gynecology and obstetrics are provided in a single site by doctors committed to women's health care. The other sites are in Daly City and at UCSF's main campus on Parnassus.

At each site, education and information are emphasized and women are encouraged to actively participate in their own health care. "It is extremely important for a woman to find providers who will encourage her participation in decisions regarding her health and who will respect the preferences she voices," says Nancy Milliken, MD, co-director of UCSF Women's Health and associate clinical professor of ob/gyn. Adds Laurel Dawson, MD, co-director and associate clinical professor of internal medicine, "close collaboration among the different specialists at each site frequently results in more timely, convenient, and higher quality of care for a patient."

For many years the medical establishment has focused research and treatments on men, says Milliken. UCSF Women's Health hopes to change that bias, in part, by recognizing that women's bodies differ from men's in many subtle ways, by understanding that treatments developed for men may not be right for women and by encouraging collaboration among the many experts at the forefront of women's health care.

To join the many women already being served by UCSF Women's Health, contact your employer and/or health insurance company to sign up for a health plan that offers UCSF Women's Health.

UCSF seeks women for bladder study

The UCSF Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences is looking for women to participate in a study to evaluate a new time-release medication for bladder control problems.

The study will determine whether women prefer to take the drug oxybutinin, which has been proven safe, over other medication.

Participants must be between the ages of 40 and 75 and must have urge incontinence, the involuntary loss of urine after experiencing a sudden urge to urinate or having leakage without warning. Women will be required to make four to 12 clinic visits at UCSF/Mount Zion and Saturday morning times will offered to working women. Women must be willing to keep a diary of bladder control problems during the study. Transportation will be provided. Volunteers will be compensated $50 for each clinic visit and $200 at the completion of the study. Interested women should call (415) 885-7547 for more information.

Shuttle to the Park this summer

All summer long on Saturdays and Sundays, people who visit Golden Gate Park can park at the UCSF garage and take the free shuttle to the Music Concourse, which is near the California Academy of Sciences, the Japanese Tea Garden, and the de Young and Asian Art museums. Parking at UCSF's garage off Irving Street costs $3. From there, it's just a brief jaunt to the shuttle stop. For more information, call (415) 750-7145.

UC Regents approve 3-year buildout of Laurel Hts. campus

The UC Regents recently approved a three-year buildout plan for UCSF's Laurel Heights campus.

Design is under way of about 35 different departments for administrative and office research space, 12 of which will serve as the hub of the Center for Social, Behavioral & Policy Sciences.

The revised building schedule includes designing the plans through February 1997, getting fire safety approval from the state, beginning the bidding process and then awarding contracts. Construction is expected to start by mid-1997 with the first set of occupants moving in June 1998. The Laurel Heights campus is slated to be fully occupied by May 1999.

Join AIDS Walk on July 21

UCSF will again join with hundreds of community members to participate in the Tenth Annual AIDS Walk in San Francisco on Sunday, July 21. To register for the event or to sponsor a walker, call Martha Geraty, UCSF's team leader, at (415) 476-4394.